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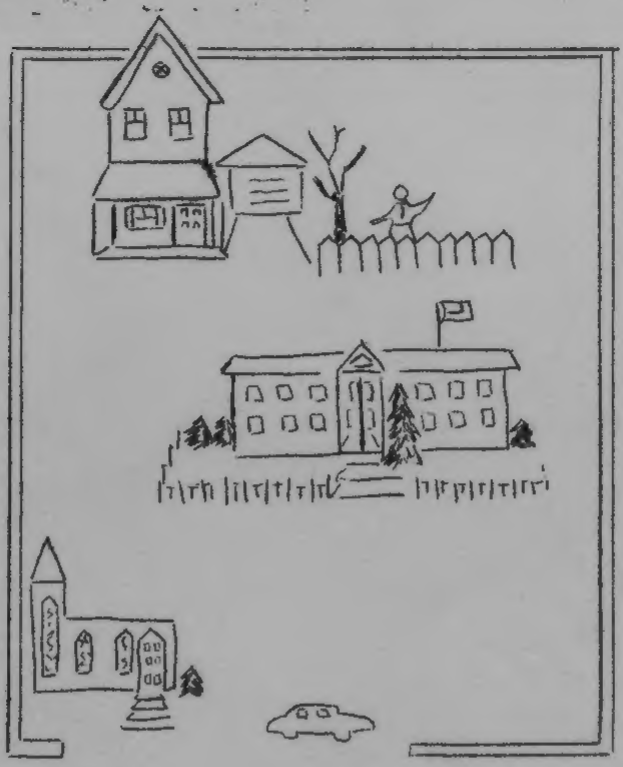

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CLINTON HILL NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

1959

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The Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council has made a significant contribution to the "New Newark" by establishing a new sense of individual and community responsibility for the health, housing, welfare, safety and education of the people in Clinton Hill.

The Council of Social Agencies believes wholeheartedly in Neighborhood Councils and gives them its full support in every way. It believes that the Neighborhood Council, as the New England Town Meeting at the beginning of our history, provides a way for the people of a community to assume their citizens' responsibilities and act according to democratic procedure.

The Council of Social Agencies is deeply concerned that the impact and uniqueness of community councils continue to have an effect on total community planning.

Urban renewal, housing, education, and welfare will progress only through constant vigilance of the people of the community. Clinton Hill, as one of the many Councils in Newark, has shown that this vigilance can be carried on in a truly democratic way.

This Annual Report of the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council is the symbol of the ability of a neighborhood council not only to survive but to grow and grow. Congratulations!

Jacob W. Feldman, Director
Group Work and Recreation
Division

George J. Brenn
12 Coolidge Road
Maplewood, N. J.

Mr. Stanley B. Winters, President
Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council
26 Shanley Avenue
Newark 8, New Jersey

Dear Stanley:

As a member of the Advisory Board, I am constantly amazed at the dynamic nature of the Council, and the diversified nature of its activities. If there is a fault present in the picture, it is a tendency to be overly ambitious, and to disregard realistic restraints. But even this may ultimately prove to be an asset.

I don't believe that I have anything of value to contribute to the Annual Report beyond this one point; if Clinton Hill is to improve and defeat the threat of slum conditions, it will be accomplished by developing the leadership essential to carrying out such a program.

The absence of people with leadership qualities in itself results in blight, and the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council is doing an excellent job in training leaders and putting them to work. I believe our Block Leaders are setting and helping to maintain neighborhood standards, are encouraging the weak, reproving offenders, and helping their neighbors. And only those of us who see the leaders close up can appreciate how successfully they are accomplishing these things, and how extremely important their contribution is.

I shall look forward to seeing your 1959 Annual Report.

Ever sincerely,

/s/ George J. Brenn

THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

1959 - "Year of the Three D's"

The year of 1959 marked the fourth since the founding of the neighborhood council. Like each one since 1956, it was a year of intensive and instructive activity on many fronts. While the most serious attention was given to housing and schooling, other matters such as public safety, welfare, and recreation got their attention, too. In this respect, the council continues its role as a unique neighborhood organization: it is the minute men of Clinton Hill, responding to the immediate needs of the community; but it is also the general staff of Clinton Hill, making long range plans and evaluating overall trends. Its strength lies, first, in its diversity; second, in its democracy; and third, in its diplomacy. I shall take up these three "D's" one at a time.

The first "D" is diplomacy, or the conduct of the external affairs of the council, its relations with other private and public agencies in the city. In four years we have learned a little about diplomacy, but we still have much to learn. One thing we have learned is that there are very few groups in Newark which are consistently vocal on problems facing the people. There are some organizations which wake up every fall, near election time; there are others which cry out when their own toes are stepped on. But since the new Charter came in in 1954, there seemed to have developed a vacuum in civic affairs which very few independent-minded persons and groups are filling. Some organizations dissolved after the Charter battle was won. Others were absorbed into new city agencies. Some were weakened because many leaders and members began to move out of town. As a result, the Council has had to fight almost alone in certain areas. In part, this was due to the fact that we didn't know the best way of getting together with other groups, I suppose. There are encouraging signs that this vacuum is being filled, and that our council will have strong allies in the fight for better schooling, housing and other things we need.

Another thing we have learned is that the downtown seems to be getting more attention than the neighborhoods. In part this is due to the help which downtown leaders have given to the administration, to the money which they have put out for surveys, paid staff, new construction. But it is also due to a sort of inferiority feeling on the part of neighborhood people, that perhaps they really didn't know enough to sit in on some of the boards and other bodies that make the important decisions affecting us. For example, who from Clinton Hill sat on the Central Planning Board when it overruled its official city planner and asked that Clinton Avenue be rezoned for business

above South 10th Street? No one. Who from Clinton Hill was present when the NCNCR worked out fine points about the Urban Renewal Project? No one. Who from Clinton Hill sits on the Municipal Sanitation Commission? No one. Who from Clinton Hill sits on the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations, a body we have worked very closely with for four years? No one. This does not mean that we do not have persons sympathetic to our aims; but it does mean that vital questions are decided and we have no direct voice. It also means that many issues affecting Newark are being made by persons, deeply interested in the city, but whose interests end at 5 p.m. when work is over. So we are fighting for a voice and will continue to send letters, delegations, and speakers downtown in the absence of a direct voice in these bodies.

We have also learned that nothing moves on its own accord in public life. There has to be a push, a suggestion, a direction. Last month was three years since the Urban Renewal Project was announced. It was designed to fight slums. We welcomed it, were important in landing it. Yesterday's Newark News, in an article titled "Return to Chaos?" said, "As part of its drive against blight, Newark has a program which is unique, the Clinton Hill neighborhood rehabilitation plan. This was given a boost several weeks ago when the federal government cut red tape to save six months of valuable time on structural surveys." It is unique in other ways, too. It began with fine close citizen participation, with a stepped up timetable, with vast good will. And now citizen participation in planning is nil, the timetable is still eight months to a year before any major work begins, and instead of goodwill we have skepticism and apathy - why? Because a one way traffic pattern was instituted in October 1958 without any neighborhood orientation or preparation. Because this pattern was unenforced, neglected, ignored. Because a parking lot was built which aesthetically and practically violates all understanding, being too large, providing no easy access to the proposed park in the rear. Because only the good will and good sense of persons living in the area has kept blight from growing any more than it has. I hope that instead of a showpiece on paper, to be cited in reports and official releases, the Urban Renewal Project will become a human project, involving all residents in the area, and that tangible results will be apparent before it celebrates its silver anniversary.

In diplomacy, an area of concern is the Associated Community Councils of Newark. The Associated Councils got started shortly after Clinton Hill was organized, back in 1956. It grew slowly, until now it numbers ten groups, from over the city, of varying strength and diversity. Our Council was one of the first members of the Associated Councils; we have paid $5 annual dues regularly, and have helped to support such Associated Councils' functions as the annual spring workshops and the ACTION display at the Essex House. In its turn, the ACC has helped Clinton Hill by co-sponsoring a 1957 bus trip to Philadelphia, letters and statements on behalf of some causes dear to our hearts, the latest one being to oppose the proposed rezoning for business of Clinton A venue from South 10th to South 16th Streets. In

the course of working with persons from other Councils, a network of city-wide acquaintances has developed; there have been friendly actions of mutual support between Clinton Hill and our geographic neighbors in Weequahic and Central Ward. But we have suffered, too, by a noticeable discrepancy in the degree of organization and militancy in Clinton Hill as compared with other areas. This is now, to some degree, changing; but we are still burdened by the fact that there has emerged no city-wide community council movement of real stature. In addition, the leadership of the Associated Councils has veered and tacked on a number of occasions where a frank stand would have enhanced its character. We in Clinton Hill, that is, the persons who serve as delegates to the Associated Councils, will strive to strengthen that group in the coming years. In addition, we will work closely with our geographic neighbors. Already we have indications that the Weequahic Community Council, under new leadership, and the new Meeker Avenue Neighborhood Group, are willing to sit down with us and talk over mutual questions. I sincerely hope that other councils will begin to expand their memberships, work out practical goals, and take a more vocal non-partisan role in community affairs.

My views of the relationship with and functioning of city agencies are mixed. I feel that somewhere along the line, the inspection arms of the Health Department and the Buildings Division are not doing all they could to cite, process, and press violations of the various codes. In 1959, our secretary sent down over 150 complaints, and I know others went down from the various block branches. Some were acted upon, others not. The filing of a complaint, alas!, is no guarantee of action. In addition, there are continued violations of the zoning code through illegal usages and conversions. We hear from officials downtown that the code is so widely violated that there is no point in enforcing it. But the very persons who say this are the ones responsible for the lack of enforcement! Are we who wish to see overcrowding, home businesses, basement apartments, and other illegal usages ended, to be the victims of official neglect? The enforcement of the zoning and other codes remains a sure guide as to the sincerity of city officials as to the "New Newark." For years now, top city officials, with power to change things, have been calling for centralization and overhauling of the inspection procedures, but nothing concrete has been done. We in Clinton Hill want these codes enforced, so the majority will benefit from better living conditions, lessened pressure on public facilities, and a more stable neighborhood. We don't want the "New Newark" to mean bulldozers for Clinton Hill.

So far as the Sanitation Department is concerned, through several meetings with representatives of that agency, we have gotten to know their problems and point of view better. I personally endorse Mayor Carlin's statement of December 18, 1959, that he would consider an ordinance or policy to ticket houses which violate health and sanitary codes. I hope that this and other recent statements by administration leaders are not "election babies," but that they will grow up after the coming

special election is over.

So far as the Commission on Neighborhood Conservation and Rehabilitation is concerned, in 1959 we continued cordial relations with several members of that Commission and its staff. But still there was a gap. A field official of the NCNCR failed to answer half a dozen council letters and a personal visit inviting him to meet with the executive committee to work out a cooperative program in the Urban Renewal Area. But there seem to be prospects for a better working relationship in 1960. Right now we are attempting to see if NCNCR leaders have a concept of "citizen participation" in Urban Renewal akin to ours. We have proposed a series of area and block meetings to reacquaint residents with the Project. We have proposed a liaison committee, similar to one which worked with City Planner Hoover, so that neighborhood and downtown stay in touch and work together. Our Advisory Board has suggested that a resident of Clinton Hill be appointed to the NCNCR in a formal letter to it. It has invited Mayor Carlin to meet with it in February to discuss urban renewal and other matters.

So far as the police department was concerned, no major matters of police-community relations were brought to our attention. But in several cases where the Precinct seemed slow to act, our block-branch people had to go directly to the Police Director to get action. We are ready to work with the Precinct. The top officers there are well aware of us, but if the complaints we bring to them are well founded, action should follow. Parked trucks on residential streets should automatically be ticketed; double parking, horn honking, should be dealt with, as well as more important matters of criminal apprehension and investigation.

Turning to the City Council, in 1959 we met twice with Councilwoman Cooper and once with Councilman Callaghan. I propose that other Councilmen be invited to meet with us to learn more about our aims, and we more about their viewpoint. On several occasions we spoke personally to the Council, on others messages were sent down. I am disappointed over the apparent demise of the proposed Rooming House Code, submitted last October, which somehow has got lost in the shuffle. Part of it is our fault. We should be down there every meeting asking about it. Perhaps the rooming house operators put on pressure; perhaps everything waits till after the special election. The code will not work miracles, especially without full enforcement. But it must get on the books first. It will plug many loopholes which neglectful landlords take advantage of; it will encourage more conscientious landlords; and it will insure that tenants will get more speedy and better maintenance, to which their rentals fully entitle them.

Our contacts with the Board of Education have been very fruitful, not because they have brought material relief in the school situation in Clinton Hill, but because the repeated, thorough, and balanced presentations which members of the Education Committee have made before the Board have elevated

our school problems from a local concern to one of city-wide scope. This was done despite the antipathy of the present PTA leadership, a mood which we hope will turn to one of mutual self-help; in this, I know that our Education Committee members are ready to meet at any time and place with anyone in Clinton Hill or elsewhere who is ready to fight for better schooling. I think this battle will be won, but we must bring up heavier forces than we have yet mustered.

This concludes the first "D" - diplomacy.

THE SECOND "D" IS DIVERSITY.

In 1959 the council maintained its interracial and inter-group diversity. As in any organization, there is bound to be turnover. The remarkable thing is that, given the relatively high rate of transient residence in the neighborhood, Council membership and leadership continued to reflect diversity. No one in the Council makes any survey as to the background of the members; the Council is open to all interested persons. But it is apparent that its ranks represent a cross-section on the community, although the proportions within this cross-section may vary. This diversity is something we take as a matter of course now, it is an exciting thing because it shows conclusively that persons of varying backgrounds can work co-operatively together. But we cannot relax. There is always the danger that diversity may be lost. Every policy decision we take should be inbued with the need for preserving and defending the racially diverse character of the neighborhood, so that a segregated area will not develop. To the same extent, we should encourage religious diversity within the council; we must show that the council can serve the major religious groups and institutions in the neighborhood. We look with pride upon the contributions made by Trinity Methodist Church, Temple B'Nai Abraham, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, and other institutions. I recall the fine assistance given by Blessed Sacrament Church in previous years. There is no point in denying that, in some respects, the close links between the council and one or two institutions have loosened. I hope that will soon be cleared up, and that cooperations will be restored. We must become partisans of neighborhood unity by seeking help and guidance from every segment of the community. I should like to see the Treasurer and the Budget and Finance Committee visit community leadership and win it over. I hope that the Advisory Board members, who now number 28 outstanding religious, business, and civic leaders will help in this selling job. The recent meetings and proposals of the Advisory Board constitute a very bright spot in the 1959 picture. The Board, in its three meetings, dealt with three tangible problems: rent gouging, Clinton Avenue promotion, and Urban Renewal. Several of the members spoke for a new school. Mr. George Brenn, President of the Robert Treat Savings and Loan Association, was elected President of the Board, and Mr. Walter Pezda, librarian of the Clinton Branch Public Library, was elected secretary. We council members are proud to have initiated this group. Together with the policy-making council assembly and the policy-carrying-out executive committee, the Advisory Board forms an essential

partnership in presenting the widest possible neighborhood unity to the government and private agencies upon whose help we depend for survival.

So far as leadership is concerned, a number of key persons left us in 1959. I refer to Mr. Charles Landever of the Bergen Street block branch and Reverend Ralph Riley, pastor of Hopewell Baptist Church, both of whom died in the beginning of the year. I refer to Reverend Carl Uehling, pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church on Avon Avenue, who accepted a call to Akron, Ohio. I refer to the Reverend and Mrs. Stanley J. Hallett, Mr. Hallett being associate minister in Trinity Methodist Church and a vice-president of the council, and Mrs. Hallett being chairman of the education committee. Both were among the original founders of the council. It would be impossible to compress the tremendous aid and encouragement, the enthusiasm and optimism, which the Halletts brought to every responsibility they undertook. I also refer to Sol and Florence Fanshel, who were active in the block-building and education committees. I refer to the departure for Army service of Ralph Sims, dynamic head of the recreation committee, an officer in the Bergen Street Block Branch, and a general trouble shooter. I know there are others, in committees and in block-branches, and I pay tribute to them all.

The amazing thing is that, first, each of these people left with colors flying, active and helpful till the very last minute; and second, that others stepped into their spots to carry on. Thus the diversity of the council provides it with the human resources to man the vital leadership posts. Also, the non-partisan basis of the council has helped its diversity, because people of varying political loyalties and beliefs are working side-by-side in our ranks. I repeat, the diversity of the council is a cherished asset and should be jealously safeguarded.

Another asset in the council in 1959 was the THIRD "D" ITS DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING. Looking at council structure first, in 1959 the assembly discussed the report of the by-laws committee and adopted, at its October 9th meeting, the by-laws which have been mailed to all paid-up members. Together with the Constitution, approved in 1957, these documents constitute an unusual guide. First, they were drawn up and based upon actual experience; they are not meaningless phrases, nor are they rigid rules. I advise all members to read them through; perhaps the various branches and committees might discuss the Constitution and By-Laws to familiarize themselves with the council's set-up. There may be amendents offered, for we should think constantly of improving and adjusting our structure. You will note that council policy is made by the Assembly, which consists of the elected officers and two representatives from each block branch and member institution. The Assembly met every two months during the past year, as provided in the Constitution, and even had a special meeting in July. It may interest you to know that these seven assembly meetings drew together about 200 persons, many of whom attended each and every meeting. Yet if every person who was responsible to attend Assembly

meetings were present, in other words two from each block branch and institution, plus the officers, the grand total would have reached about 400 persons. If your branch or institution has not been sending representatives; if no report of assembly actions is made to you, then you should inquire as to the name of the delegates responsible. The assembly is the representative of all council members. If you are not now in a block branch, you can either help to get one started on your block or attend the meetings of the branch nearest you. The important thing is that the assembly be a group truly representative of council opinion.

The Executive Committee, in turn, met once each of the past twelve months, and twice had special meetings, for a total of fourteen meetings. The Executive Committee is the day-to-day operating leadership of the council. It includes the eight elected officers and, at present, six committee heads. The Executive Committee set the agenda for assembly meetings, screened the names of the nominating committee, planned and helped execute the Birthday Party last February, the May Annual Conference at Clinton Place Junior High School, the November housing conference, and the forum on the change-of-government referendum at the December meeting. The committee met, on occasion, with Councilwoman Cooper, Miss Coleman and Miss Cronheim of the NCNCR, Sanitation Commissioner Tedesco, and other city officials. Several officers were prevented by business or other commitments from regular attendance, but maintained contact through other means. Meetings of this vital committee are an education in themselves. It has been very rewarding to have worked closely with such a spirited group of men and women.

So far as the democratic functioning of the council is concerned, this is an outgrowth of its voluntary nature. We are all giving time, energy, and money to this cause because we believe it is important; we believe it has shown results, and can continue to do so. Thus the opinion of each member must be valued; every one who wishes to must have a chance to speak at meetings. Decisions may not be railroaded through, nor may they be endlessly obstructed. I believe, on the basis of personal observations in dozens of meetings on block, committee, and assembly levels, that we do strive to adhere to this democratic concept. But we must not rest easily on past achievements. Goals must be continually defined and refined.

There have also been meetings where leadership has not functioned in the best manner. Agendas should be announced and approved at the outset of a meeting. Rigid parliamentary procedure should be avoided; everyone should be encouraged to discuss, question, and vote. Excessive time should not be spent on any one item when there are several items on the agenda. The leader or chairman should function as moderator to find out what others think, instead of announcing his views at the outset. All decisions should be written down, so they can be followed up and reports made at the following meeting. Meeting places should vary, so that other persons may get a chance to act as host or hostess. By meeting in different homes, we see how others live, the fine work in maintenance and

cleanliness which is done, and also the very real problems which face many residents. In the coming year, the Executive Committee will stress the role of leadership and encourage new people to step forward. Every council member is a potential leader, both within the council and on his block. But this leadership, to be effective, to help build the council, must be friendly, cooperative, not lordly, undemocratic. The council's democratic procedure and atmosphere will attract more and more persons to join and help in our common cause.

As you can see, the running of the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council, the planning of its functions, sending its notices, alerting its members, and conducting its activities is a vast operation. No wonder that some things are not done too well and others are neglected. But we have managed to achieve a great deal. Obviously such an operation is too large for any one person or small group. We are all busy, some as housewives, parents, teachers, machine operators, salesmen, mechanics, factory hands, professional men. Forty to sixty hours a week of our time is committed. Yet we find time to help. I hope that the present officers who are reelected, and the new officers who will take office tonight, will work to draw more and more people into activity. I also hope that more and more council members and friends will step forward to volunteer, to inquire, to help in council functions, to help mak its program, to bring in new members, to help build our unity. We must stay closely united. There is strength in our unity; our unity is the best guarantee, on the municipal level at any rate, that the better schools, codes, services, and atmosphere that we want will come into being in the years ahead.

—STANLEY B. WINTERS, President

HOUSING AND ZONING COMMITTEE

I. The Problem

In June, the Housing Committee submitted a "Report on Housing in Clinton Hill" which still represents, in its broad outlines, the problems our neighborhood confronts in this area. On the encouraging side, we note that many homes, especially the one and two family owner-occupied homes, have shown noticeable improvements in exterior maintenance, through paint-up and fix-up jobs, and also in interior repairs and redecoration. Also, there are some indications that "enforcement of regulations against overcrowding in two and three family homes have been at least partially effective." However, "the serious situation" in multi-family homes and larger apartment dwellings, reported in June has apparently become somewhat more aggravated. Three problems, in particular, demand continuing attention: (1) rent gouging (2) property deterioration (notably in cases involving absentee ownership) and (3) inadequate housing and zoning code enforcement. A brief word about each:

1. Rent gouging: Pressures are being exerted by owners to force numbers of white tenants and Negroes who dare to speak out for their rights to move from their homes to make way for Negro and Puerto Rican occupancy at higher rentals. Three factors have especially encouraged this practice: (1) the great demand for housing among minority groups due to limited supply because of discrimination, rapidly increasing population in these groups, reduced housing supply available to minority families because of clearance, and the virtual absence of any genuine middle income family housing construction; (2) the organization of certain property owners which has encouraged rent fixing at higher than the competitive market rate throughout the city; and (3) the absence of rent control.

2. Property deterioration: Absentee owners in many multi-family dwellings have reduced maintenance expenditures, and have resisted the quite resistible official efforts at code enforcements. Partly out of hostility to high rentals and poor maintenance and partly because of inadequate education in housing upkeep under urban conditions, some tenants in these dwellings have failed to meet their obligations in property maintenance.

3. Inadequate code enforcement: Although numerous complaints of housing and zoning code violations have been reported to proper city authorities by the Neighborhood Council and individual residents, enforcement, if any follow-up has occurred, has too often been "too little, too late". While this laxity may be to some extent due to (as we have sometimes been told) an "inadequate number of inspectors", the absence of a unified inspection system, including an adequate "referral system" between departments responsible for inspection and code enforcement, is, perhaps, the greater cause of this deficiency. The Second Interim Report on Urban Renewal, released in October by the City Planning Office, would support this analysis. An even more disturbing reason for this weak enforcement effort by the city is revealed in the comments of certain city employees, in reply to complaints - "What do you expect when you live in that kind of neighborhood?" or "Why

don't you get out before it's too late?" (or other less printable words.) While we don't believe that this represents the official city attitude toward Clinton Hill and its future as a well-integrated neighborhood, we are disturbed that this attitude works its effects, even if it occurs only at lower levels of city enforcement operations.

As a consequence of these housing problems, "unwholesome forces are being generated in the community: overcrowding in schools; increased transiency; disproportionate amounts of income spent on rent; lowered morale; disruption of normal family life; decline in the support of community institutions; imbalancing of the integrated character of the neighborhood; and economic exploitation of helpless non-white families.

II. Accomplishments of the Housing Committee During 1959

A. Efforts to Stop Rent Gouging

1. The committee has authorized delegations to meet with landlords reportedly responsible for rent gouging and other unethical practices. Notably, we have sought to meet with the owner of the 16 family apartments at 116 Shanley Avenue (where apartments which rented for $56-68 monthly in June 1958, when whites occupied the building, were renting for $95 one year later forcing the white occupants to move, and were raised up to $145 on July 1 for certain tenants who protested the rent increases and numerous housing violations for which the owner was responsible.) The results of continued pressures were significant improvements in property maintenance and services, and an apparent halting of further "across-the-board" rent increases for all tenants, but not without a price being paid - a court order evicting the tenant families who had fought against this exploitation.

2. Continued efforts have been made to call the "rent gouging" problem to the attention of the city administration and the general public. The results thus far:

(a) A report to the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations, followed by written reports on more than a dozen cases, have led to strong public statements against rent gouging both by Mayor Carlin and Mr. Sanford Krasner, President of the Real Estate Board of Newark, Irvington and Hillside.

(b) After a personal survey conducted with Mr. Stanley Winters, Andre Briod, reporter for the Newark News, detailed for the public how rent gouging is practiced in Clinton Hill, in an article, headlined "Housing Squeeze is Spreading Slums".

(c) In November, as a result of parallel pressures by the Central Ward Community Council, a conference on rent gouging was called by the Mayor at West Kinney Junior High School. Although the meeting was sponsored by the Central Ward Community Council, representatives of the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council were present, and Mrs. Rose Heymen, a council member, in her capacity as coordinator of the Newark Tenants' League, forcefully presented detailed citations of several of the cases which the Housing Committee had been pursuing. The Mayor, on that occasion, called attention to the CHNC complaints, and warned that this problem has become so urgent that we "may be reaching a point where legislators will have to step in" if our cities are not going to "go to pot".

(d) Following up a commitment made at that meeting, the Mayor has directed Mr. Daniel Anthony, director of the Mayor's Committee on Group Relations, to organize a committee on tenant-landlord

relations. This committee dubbed "The Mayor's Committee on Tenant-Landlord Relations," which the CHNC Housing coordinator serves as recording secretary, brings together for the first time, on what promises to be a regular basis, "representatives" (though not so officially designated) of the NCNJR, the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations, the Newark Real Estate Board, the Newark Tenants' League, the Central Ward Community Council, and the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council. This group, which has already met twice, has made significant progress toward the formulation of several significant recommendations, including a city requirement that all multiple dwellings of three families or more should be re-assessed on the basis of rental income and that annual financial statements be filed by the owners of these properties. This committee is presently attempting to set up a luncheon meeting with representatives of the Property Owners' Cooperative Association and other landlords to explore the prospects of achieving more adequate understandings on tenant and landlord rights and responsibilities. The apparently united front of this committee, representing the most powerful concerted approach to previously uncooperative landlords, is an important step forward in the application of a strategy of moral persuasion.

2. Efforts to Discourage Property Deterioration: Much credit for efforts to alleviate this problem goes to the "Clean-up Campaigns" coordinated by the Committee on Health and Sanitation. The Housing Committee's role has been to serve as a channel for complaints regarding deteriorating conditions that constitute code violations. More than 150 private housing complaints have been submitted to city agencies.

On the positive side, the committee has worked to implement the aim of sending letters of commendation to property owners who have taken steps to improve their dwellings.

The committee has yet to implement an Advisory Board recommendation "to utilize school assembly and PTA programs to educate parents and children in proper garbage disposal and dwelling upkeep." (See recommendations.)

3. Efforts to Obtain More Adequate Code Enforcement

In addition to filing numerous complaints with city agencies, the committee has:

(a) Worked with other council committees in forcing the closing of the dwellings at 66 Seymour Avenue as "unfit for human habitation" until adequate corrections were made.

(b) Called public attention to the need for stepped-up enforcement through press releases, delegations to city agencies, the Fall Housing Conference, and liaison relations with such groups as the Associated Community Councils and the Newark Council of Churches.

(c) Distributed summaries and led discussions at several block-branch and other council meetings to mobilize neighborhood support for the revised Housing Code, including new Rooming House Ordinance that is scheduled for City Council action in the next few weeks.

(d) Promoted the successful fight against proposed re-zoning of certain first residence streets in Clinton Hill (Leslie, Girard, South 10th, etc.) and forwarded the results of a N.C.E. - conducted poll, which revealed overwhelming opposition, to the City Planner for future reference.

e. Is currently coordinating a new fight against proposed rezoning of Clinton Avenue between South 10th and South 16th Streets. Under the chairmanship of John Judson, every institution in that area is being urged to issue public statements in opposition to this rezoning. Churches and individuals are circulating hundreds of petitions. Letters have been sent by the Council secretary to the Planning Board, all members of city council, the business administrator, the councilwoman, and the Newark News. D elegations are planning to meet individually with city councilmen, as well as appearing before city council hearings, if this becomes necessary. As this report goes to press, we are gratified to note that Councilwoman Cooper, the Girard Place Association, Trinity Methodist Church, and the Associated Community Councils have joined the Neighborhood Council in publicly expressing strong opposition to the proposed Clinton Avenue rezoning. The Council has also received a letter from Business Administrator Rinaldi expressing both his own and the Mayor's strong opposition to this rezoning and their pledge to do all in their power to prevent its enactment. No relaxation of effort can be permitted, however, until this Planning Board proposal is soundly defeated.

4. The CHNC Fall Housing Conference

After months of preparation, a Clinton Hill Housing Conference, set up on an invitational basis, brought together representatives of a dozen Newark organizations with Council leaders to explore the needs of a coordinated city-wide citizens' housing strategy. Workshops on "Urban Renewal","Rental and Sales Practices", "Housing and Zoning Codes and Their Enforcement" and "Citizen Participation" produced approximately thirty recommendations (which are reflected in the "Recommendations" sections of this report).

5. Conference Follow-up:

(a) A "continuations committee" has been charged with the responsibility of sharing the results of the Housing Conference with various citizens' organizations having an interest in housing as a basis of exploring the prospects for the formation of a city-wide citizens' housing council.

(b) A conference with the City Planner and NCNCR representatives has been held to discuss the prospects for middle income housing and housing for the elderly in connection with the 14-block urban renewal program. Several proposals put forward are now receiving committee consideration.

(c) Several committee members were represented in an Executive Committee delegation that met in December with officials of the NCNCR in an effort to increase "citizen participation" in urban renewal planning. The results of this conference are indicated in the President's report.

III. Recommendations for 1960

A. Top Priorities for Action

1. Continuation of drive to defeat Planning Board recommendation for re-zoning Clinton Avenue.

2. Development of a plan and enlistment of financial support for the development of middle income cooperative housing in and/or proximate to the designated urban renewal area.

3. Mobilization of neighborhood support to urge speedy enactment by City Council on the proposed Revised Housing Code.

4. Close liaison with Mayor's Committee on Tenant-Landlord Relations in an effort to develop a code of tenant-landlord rights and responsibilities, supervised by that or a similarly representative committee.

5. Increased demands for administrative implementation of unified inspection system.

6. Promotion of a Newark Citizen's Housing Council.

7. Formation of a Neighborhood Development Corporation, composed of council, business, and institutional leaders to develop neighborhood priorities and private financing for renewal efforts in housing and related areas.

B. Legislative Program for Council Support

1. At city level:
   (a) Amendments to proposed Revised Housing Code to include: ordinance authorizing "ticketing" procedure for housing violations (to permit immediate penalization of offenders); an ordinance requiring jail sentences and stiffer fines for repeated housing violations.
   (b) Ordinance requiring all "For Sale" signs list the zone in which the house is located and the uses to which it may be legally put.
   (c) Ordinance requiring all owners of multiple dwellings of three families or more be required to file annual reports on rental properties as basis of up-to-date assessment.
2. At state level:
   (a) A new rent control law to permit municipalities to reinstate ceilings.
   (b) Enabling legislation and low-interest mortgage funds to encourage development of middle income cooperative housing.
   (c) "Open Occupancy" legislation in the private housing field.
   (d) Revision of taxation policy; including re-evaluation of inequities in tax abatement program, readjustment of taxation to ability to pay basis (in form of broad-based personal income tax).

C. Proposals for the Improvement of Committee Operation

1. Program and Goals: clarification of short-term and long-term goals; formulation of balanced and adequate program of action in relation to these goals; periodic re-evaluations.
2. Membership:
   (a) Size: enlargement of committee to twenty members, if possible (to afford the extent of energies necessary to meet present demands for action).
   (b) Representation: enlistment of tenants and landlords, residents of various types of dwellings and various kinds of residential areas.

3. Group Process
(a) Definition of duties of coordinator, co-chairman, and member.
(b) More adequate delegation of responsibilities -- either through formation of sub-committees or assignments of individuals to specific areas of continuing responsibilities: e. g., zoning, housing code enforcement, middle income housing, legislation, information and education.
(c) Provision to members of adequate data (surveys, description of parallel community programs, legislative analysis, etc.)
(d) Periodic scheduling of in-service training sessions (e.g., consultations with experts on cooperative housing, zoning, housing legislation)
(e) Development of effective patterns of liaison relations (both participation and reporting) with related groups: e.g. Civic Improvement Committee of Associated Community Council; Social Education and Action Committee of Newark Council of Churches, Mayor's Committee on Tenant-Landlord Relations, Newark Tenants League, housing committees of NAACP, Urban League, League of Women's Voters, Americans for Democratic Action).
(f) Regular scheduling of monthly meetings of full committees.
(g) Close coordination of sub-committee work during interim between monthly meetings.
(h) Preparation of carefully planned agendas of monthly meetings, after consultation with sub-committees.
(i) Development of press clippings files; records on code violations.
(j) Organization of letter campaigns and delegations to legislative hearings on pending housing legislation at the state and federal levels.
(k) Submission of written reports to Council Assembly.

4. Information Services
(a) Frequent releases to city press; bi-monthly releases to the Neighborhood News.
(b) Periodic (3-4 times per year) publication of "fact sheets" for general neighborhood distribution.
(c) Preparation of displays for public meetings and various CHNC functions.
(d) Utilization of school assembly and PTA programs to educate parents and children in property maintenance, and tenant-landlord rights and responsibilities.
(e) Scheduling of periodic housing discussions, led by committee members, at block branch meetings.

KIM JEFFERSON
Vice President
Housing Committee Coordinator

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Education Committee is to work to improve the standards of schooling in Clinton Hill public schools. In this, it has faced serious problems.

Clinton Hill's populations, according to the Market Research Survey published in 1959, increased from 31,000 to 41,000 persons since 1950. The new families are larger and younger, thereby increasing the number of elementary school children.

While it is known that the Central Ward Redevelopment program had a great effect upon this increase, according to the survey, only 28 per cent of newcomers to Clinton Hill have come from Central Newark. The contention of some officials that Clinton Hill's population will decrease when Central Ward buildings are finished has some validity. However, we note that the present low-income projects being built will have only 1500 dwelling units, whereas the waiting list for admission is about 6,000. Further, many who have moved to Clinton Hill have bought homes or do not wish to move back. The latest Central Ward private development below Springfield Avenue, proposed last month, would displace other families, many of whom will, unless relocation policies change, also move south in the city, further increasing the pressure.

At a meeting last January, at which Dr. Kennelly, Mr. Titus, Councilwoman Cooper, and representatives of the CHNC were present, Mr. Titus, superintendent to elementary schools, said that Clinton Hill's population was transient. While transiency has been, we feel that stabilization began when the number of houses for sale began to decline, and as available apartments were rented, or even broken up into smaller units. Moreover, the large number of owner-occupied houses purchased in the past few years has further decreased transiency. The full effect of this population growth has been experienced by the young children, the parents, and the teachers at Bergen Street and Avon Avenue schools. These structures were built about half a century ago, before World War One, to serve about 1100 students each. Now Avon has 1251 and Bergen 1458 enrolled. In February 1959, to relieve the severe overcrowding, the Superintendent of Schools instituted 14 part-session classes at Avon and 16 at Bergen. Recognizing the inadequacy of this step, your Education Committee made the following proposals to the Board and the Superintendent.

1. Construction of a new elementary school.

2. Elimination of all part-session classes.

3. Reduction of class size to 30 pupils per teacher.

4. Building of additions to Bergen and Avon to provide lunchrooms, toilets, ground floor auditoriums.

5. Temporary redistricting to other schools in the vicinity which have substantially smaller enrollments, such as Bragaw, Hawthorne, Maple, Chancellor.

6. Temporary transportation to adjacent, less crowded schools.

7. Temporary use of facilities at B'Nai Abraham.

8. Added kindergarten classes at each school.

9. Additional clerk at Avon.

10. Improved library facilities at each school.

In consideration of these proposals, one kindergarten class was added to each school. The use of B'Nai Abraham was said not to be feasible; and Avon received an added clerk.

Members of the Education Committee thereupon visited J.H.S. 43 in New York, attracted by newspaper stories about the new enriched type program that was in use there. So impressed were those who went, that they invited the principal, Dr. Daniel Schreiber, to be guest speaker at the Annual May Conference at Clinton Place JHS. Those of you who were at that conference know the great impression Dr. Schreiber made upon the people there. His program emphasized reading, educational guidance, and cultural enrichment. As a result, the Education Committee added to its list of proposals above, the request that a similar program of enriched curriculum be instituted in Clinton Hill.

In May, the Board of Education and Dr. Kennelly announced a plan to convert the fourth floor auditoriums at Bergen and Avon to classrooms to make a total of ten new classrooms and reduce the number of split-session classes to 6 at Bergen and 10 at Avon. We pressed with greater urgency the request for added buildings attached to these schools, because now each school was to be left without an auditorium.

In June, the parents at Bergen and Avon were presented with a plan for possible transportation to McKinley Street school, about 6 miles away in North Newark. The plan was overwhelmingly rejected by parents, many of whom felt that the only real solution was the construction of a new school in the area. In an attempt to express this strong feeling, the Education Committee issued its petition addressed to the Board and Dr. Kennelly, a petition which gathered over 2700 signatures to date. Then, in a statement of June 5, titled "School Needs and Urban Renewal" the Council's Assembly lamented the failure of Dr. Kennelly to develop adequate plans because his failure jeopardized the very important Clinton Hill Urban Renewal Project. The statement noted that under section 220d (1) A of the National Housing Act (1954), any municipal Urban Renewal Plan must conform "to definite local objectives respecting appropriate land uses....recreational

and community facilities, and other public improvements..." This meant that the Assembly felt that Newark must show good faith by matching the federal funds with its own improved facilities in the area. Failure to do this, the statement concluded, might expose the city to the charge that it was not properly implementing the Project.

Among the committee's next steps was one urging that individuals from among Clinton Hill's professional, business, and religious leaders speak out for a new school. In response, Mr. George Brenn, President of the Robert Treat Savings and Loan Association; Dr. P. Gordon Dawson, 777 South 10th Street; Mrs. Samuel B. Illingworth, 59 Shanley Avenue; Mr. Neal Zucker, representing the Clinton Avenue Merchants Association, the Reverend Alan Geyer, pastor of Trinity Methodist Church; and Mrs. Sophie Cooper, councilwoman, spoke at meetings of the Board of Education or wrote letters. The largest single cross-representative effort of the committee was its October Parade for a New School. While hundreds did not turn out, seventy-five to one hundred stalwart residents met on Broad Street and with placards marched to the Board to applaud a spokesman from the committee voicing our demands. The hundreds of leaflets issued around this parade served further to inform the community and the Board of our united determination to press onward.

There have been several hints that the Board or Dr. Kennelly may be considering further measures. One may be redistricting, another, rather vaguely, may be "new construction." We intend to be down at every Board meeting to voice our demands as we have done each time for the past eleven months.

Regarding our experience with the P.T.A.'s of the schools in question, the committee found that while it was possible to raise issues concerning school needs at Avon Ave. meetings, these meetings did not provide the necessary form through which these problems could properly and fully be discussed. All attempts toward Education Committee and Bergen St. PTA co-operation were met with resistance. Our decision is to work with the P.T.A.'s whenever we can, but that it may be necessary to find other avenues of communication with the parents of the schools.

At our meeting with Mayor Carlin a month ago, he promised to speak to Dr. Kennelly about our request for a new school and meet with us again in the near future.

Future plans of the committee include a personal letter-writing campaign to the Mayor asking for a new school; an Education Rally to be held some time in March, and organizing a Central-South Ward Committee for Better Education.

In conclusion, a quote from our November statement to the Board, "As the proportion of non-whites has increased in Clinton Hill, so has the standard of our education facilities declined. We wish to urge the Board and others involved in the determination of educational levels, that as neighborhoods change and populations increase, policies both in the edu-

cational and housing area must be evolved in order to meet these new conditions. We are of the opinion that special attention should be devoted to those areas such as Clinton Hill where the possibility exists for maintaining an integrated setting."

--BERTHA GRIFFIN, Chairman
HELEN WINTERS, Vice-President in Charge

W E L F A R E A N D W E L C O M E

The duties of the Welfare and Welcome Committee are to provide information on community services to new neighbors in Clinton Hill, and to organize emergency relief. We have accomplished much, but still many plans have not been completed. We have helped in welcoming at affairs of council entertainment and conferences, our leaflets have been widely distributed through institutions and banks and the public library, our support has been pledged to disaster control through the Red Cross. Many neighbors have been welcomed to block branches.

At a meeting with a representative of Fuld Neighborhood House, Council support was asked in pressing for aid in fighting juvenile delinquency through a program they now have in operation.

This committee has worked with the United Appeals and Red Cross.

Our aim to lend support to senior citizens through the Welfare Federation was not too successful, but we made an effort to find places available to house some entertainment for them.

This committee needs representation from every block branch to function properly and carry out a wider program.

--ELSIA SMITH, Chairman

C O M M U N I C A T I O N S

Report made orally --Stan Aronowitz, Chairman

P U B L I C S A F E T Y

Report made orally --LOU PITTS, Chairman

HEALTH AND SANITATION COMMITEE

The Health and Sanitation Committee handles violations of health and sanitation codes, deals with problems of street cleaning and garbage collection, and helps to improve health conditions in Clinton Hill.

During the past year the Sanitation Committee has distributed several thousands of Sanitation Code cards through Block Branches to members and residents of this area. In this way we hoped to educate people as to disposal of garbage, proper receptacles to use, time to place rubbish at the curb and removal of rubbish cans from the curb.

The two weeks period of May 2nd through May 16th were Clean-up Weeks in this area. This clean-up Campaign sponsored by the Junior Chamber of Commerce and the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council was very successful. Many homes had a complete face lifting during this drive. Publicity was paid for by the Junior Chamber of Commerce. The opening of the drive was announced by members of the Council over a loud speaker circulating the neighborhood. Cellars were cleaned out by tenants in multiple dwellings, vacant lots were cleaned, fences and stairs were repaired. The Sanitation Department of the City reported that this year's campaign, as far as they were concerned, broke all records. We are hoping that tenants and landords will continue to keep their places in a clean and sanitary condition. At the end of the campaign cash awards were given to thirty-three owners and tenants, three awards to each Block Branch that participated. These prizes were awarded at the Council's annual Conference at Clinton Place Junior High School by the Junior Chamber of Commerce: 1st prize for the house that did the biggest clean-up, fix-up job; 2nd prize for runner-up; 3rd prize for the house that maintained its up-keep all year round.

Many reports have been sent to the Health Department about unhealthy circumstances. We have noted that cooperation from both Sanitation and Health Departments has been very good.

In the week of October 19, a clean-up campaign was sponsored by the Clinton Avenue Merchants Association and the Clinton Hill Neighborhood Council on Clinton Avenue. We saw store fronts putting on a new look. Display windows were cleaned to make the Avenue look more attractive. We are looking forward to more participation in the future from merchants who place their wares on the sidewalks; this has always been an eye sore and tends to cheapen the area.

It is proposed that more cooperation from the police in enforcing Sanitation and Health codes is needed. More pressure must be put on second-hand furniture stores on Clinton Avenue that use sidewalks to display their wares. A stronger fight on rats and roaches that are coming into our area is needed. We must continue our fight for one side of the street parking to enable streets to be cleaned thoroughly.

--MILDRED HELMS, Chairman

T R E A S U R E R ' S R E P O R T

Expenses for 1959

Stationery and postage	$ 280.15
Rentals and insurance	55.50
Hallowe'en Parade	314.99
Public announcing	36.00
Printing	66.40
Membership Cards	14.50
Conference	22.65
Placques	
Speaker	25.00
Brochures	8.75
Reproductions	8.00
Tot lot	1.00
Choral membership	5.00
Birthday party	5.15
TOTAL spent by Council	$843.09

Held in escrow for distribution

Landever Fund	155.60
Fire victims	67.00
Rutgers (E. Pitts)	6.10
	$228.70
TOTAL disbursed by Council	$1071.79
TOTAL INCOME	$1202.16
TOTAL in Treasury 12/30/59	$ 130.37

--LEE BAILEY, Treasurer

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